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Revelation of St. Love
the Divine. By F. B.
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**The Revelation of St. Love
the Divine**

The Revelation of St. Love
the Divine. By F. B.
MONEY COUTTS



John Lane
The Bodley Head
London and New York
mdcccxcviii

Harold Kline
Richmond, Va
Mar 8th 1901

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L3

The pride of the peacock is the glory of God.
The lust of the goat is the bounty of God.
The wrath of the lion is the wisdom of God.
The nakedness of woman is the work of God.

William Blake.

Prisons are built of stones of Law,
Brothels with bricks of Religion.

Ibid.



“ I comprehend a love so fiery hot,
It burns its natural veil of august shame,
And stands sublimely in the nude, as chaste
As Medicean Venus.”

Elizabeth Barrett Browning.

Yea : lust insults, but love transfigures, sense ;
And lust has veils, but inwardly is nude ;
Love is the child unshamed, and lust, the prude ;
Love human is ; lust, angel in pretence ;
Familiar love can never give offence ;
Self-conscious, anxious lust is ever rude ;
For lust is only love's similitude,
Distorted image of true excellence.





Be all the blight of God's immediate ban
On savourers of poison at the feast
Of Love, the bridegroom ! For as beast from man
Immeasurably far, as man to beast
Indefinitely near, so small the span
From love to lust, so wide as West from East !



**The Revelation of St. Love
the Divine**



i

LEGION is Love ; or else he sums
A thousand pomps of glittering train
And splendid pageant ; for he comes
In different shape to every twain !

53

So once I cried ; but now recall
My error and recant my haste :
Though Love be on the lips of all,
How few can taste, how few can taste !



6



Some worship him with terror, lest
 Their urns of destiny he spill
And spoil a sortilege more blest ;
 And these of terror have their fill !



While some, whose reckless passion spent
 Would count Affection far above
Her origin and element,
 Have grown incredulous of Love.





ii

I care not for the man who seems
Averse from women,—stern and staid,—
Nor ever worships in his dreams
The abstract, universal Maid.



I scarce believe he worships not ;
I half surmise he worships ill ;
And keeps his heart from waxing hot
By cynic warpings of the will.





For what is buried in the bud
Must either blossom forth or be
Empoisoned ; for the virile blood
Repudiates virginity.

53
9

Of those that love not, when they can,
Most sinister I read the sign ;
For who would holier be than Man,
May holier be,—but less divine.





iii

The laws of God are not unmade,
Howe'er we tamper with the text;
On life this ordinance is laid,—
That Mind can never be unsexed.

§§
9

The Mind Religious gropes within
The entrails of Earth's loveliness,
By sinful touch to plant a sin
In love that is not passionless;





And, cultivating foul alarms
In maidens' unconsidering lives,
Grants all allurements to the arms
Of harlots,—less unnatural wives !



Their heart is colder than the grave,
Their feet go down to ways of hell,
But yet they barter semblance brave
Of loving passionately well.





ib

When drenchings of maternal drill
Have made our damsels' blood grow dark ;
When joyless generations chill
Its native warmth and quench the spark

53

Of impulse ; when no women dare,
Rather than Love should be forsworn,
Accept the World's accusing stare ;
What kind of creature will be born ?





What strange, weird creature, undesigned
By God or Demon, and unknown
To that instinctive human Mind,
Which, holding from no Church his throne,

535
9

Was crowned by Him who strewed the dust
Across the Void and Vast, to vex
The reign of Death with Love and Lust,
And cried on high, "Let there be Sex!"





fr

A pious, yet an evil, tongue
Once wished the world were womanless,
By some past folly strongly stung
To folly's mood of bitterness.

535
9

For wilder still the wild pursuit
Of fame and opulence would grow,
More fierce the predatory brute
Ambition, roaming to and fro,—





Impatient of another's need,
And envious of another's food,
Yet, brought to bay, so apt to plead
The greatest number's greatest good,—



Save Love himself the mind divide
From cupiscence to hate and hoard,
And Woman draw the heart aside
By sweet enticements of accord.





lii

For look you ! Man is selfish still,
And selfish most, when most a prude ;
Impatient to inflict an ill
To win his own beatitude.

lii

For what if God (avenging, say,
The wrongs of Mary Magdalen
And all her race) ordained to slay,—
Not women, good or bad,—but men ?





Would damsels, with consenting word,
Pronounce the new creation good,
Unjealous of the mated bird,
Her nesting hour and motherhood ?



Though some be born or nurtured nuns,
Enfeebled with degenerate flaw,
Their uninfected impulse runs
From Tolstoi to diviner law,





bii

Her sex pursues her ; though she take
 Strait vows to mortify desire,
And contradict, for Jesu's sake,
 The ordinance of Jesu's Sire ;

§
9

Although the world's contempt she flout,
 To save her sisters from their shame,
Or labour day and night to scout
 Unwedded Love's detested name ;





Or lave in blood her dainty hands,
To heal the hurt ; or tend the sick
In cruel, pestilential lands,—
A flame, dividing dead and quick ;



The welling of her fairest deeds,
Deflected from its natural course,
From one instinctive fount proceeds,—
Maternal love's familiar source.





liii

In companies of men, the theme
Oft turns to Love; and all diverse
Is everything they doubt or deem
Of Love, the blessing or the curse,



In many different modes they speak,
But still with contradiction rife,
A thousand ribaldries that reek
With all the littleness of life;





And if, perchance, one soul more wise,
 Who face to face with Love has stood,
Remembers how his father's eyes
 Once on his mother used to brood,



So fast the jest and jeer go round,
 He dares not soar, while others tread,
Lest folly pull him to the ground
 And ridicule his hardihead.





ix

And yet, methinks, the manual mark
Of God on common things of Earth,
The Presence in the wooden Ark,
Is not solemnity, but mirth.

§

Though dread the unavowed lot
To which all move and all succumb,
And humour, suffering this, is not,
And gladness, seeing this, is dumb,—





Yet Death is normal ; Life, the smile
God paints upon the lips of Death,
To make us dream a little while
Of laughter and delight of breath !



And so to Love our laughter clings ;
For dotard Death is dull to see ;
But Love is youngest of all things,
And full of immortality.





Æ

I would not murder mean content,
Nor give them wings that hate to fly ;
Not mine be their disparagement ;
Most mortals merely live and die.

§

For servants of a careless lord,
Exacting not his dues of thought,
Because he knows the tax abhorred,
The poet's rhyme was never wrought.





'Tis wrought for those who doubt that Man
Is only God's disordered toy ;
Incredulous that he would ban
Enjoyment, who created joy ;



But sure the universal search
For pleasure, to its flock denied
By each un-universal Church,
By God himself is justified.





xi

The pious maid in terror walks
Of Man ; the pious man of her !
Behind them both Religion stalks,—
Persistent, warning whisperer !



In endless eddies vaguely blown
By hatred of their own desire,
They fancy Sex by God was sown
To feed the Everlasting Fire ;





The very love with which they're dowered
In lustful dread of lust is drowned,
For what avails a mind deflowered
The virgin flesh that wraps it round ?



So Chastity in session cites
To judgment all they say or see,—
So many prisoners she indites,
No room remains for Chastity.





xii

These carry, 'neath a tempting show,
Like berries of a ruddy rind
That children pluck from quick-set row,
A poison for the tender mind.

xiii

With sinful interest in sins
By heedless innocence unnamed,
They run about with coats of skins
For making naked babes ashamed.





Not robes, that lure the human ape
To dalliance, stir their shameful blood;
Only the white, innocuous shape
Of unbedizened Womanhood.



They wear their sex upon their sleeves
For daws to peck at ; sexless they
Alone, whom mutual passion leaves
At leisure from the clinging clay.





xi

The mind that loves not leans to lust ;
Impassioned minds alone are pure :
They loathe to turn their wine to must ;
They guard the vintage, safe and sure.

xii

Not instantly they find their flower,
Unsatisfied with easy goal ;
But when they find her, hour by hour
They live to learn her, soul to soul.





Stern chastity let others feel ;
Strong principle let others prate :
No blast of impulse makes them reel,
From laws of lust emancipate.



No stranger woman lures or frights
Their fancy ; they are fancy-free ;
For knowing Love, they know delights
More pure than boasted purity.





xib

The filthy mind that fears its thought,
The captive mind that sins and sins,
Believe redemption can be wrought
By Parsifals and Lohengrins.

33

But worms, that in their mortal hour
More numerous offspring would beget,
Are duller than the mateless flower
Whose sexes in one zone are set.



32



False prophets! If ye seek to prove
How passionate worms, ye judge amiss!
Too amorous they to know of love,
Too prodigal to care for bliss!



Because ye fear the gift of fire,
Must all the Universe go freeze?
To amputate the World's desire
Could never cure the World's disease.





æ

I know no more lascivious sight
Than Parsifal before the walls
Of Klingsor's castle; and no light
Corrupter than from Wagner falls.

§

An honest man, who loved his dame,
His bride or mistress, could have riven
An easier passage through that flame
Of flaunting courtesans to heaven!





Not his to parley with those fairs,
To palter with their beckoning eyes,
Or dream of bartering for such wares
His own unpurchasable prize!



No chrismed spear need Manhood crave,
To pierce the enchanter Folly's pale;
He cleaves with Passion's trenchant glaive
His path to Love, the only Grail.





xvi

The poet of "the blameless King,"—
How fancied he his hero spent
His undetermined hours of Spring
And mazed moons of discontent?

§§
9

How passed he that distempered age,
Unformed, fantastical, perplexed,
When ladies tease the pretty page
And love to see him hot and vexed?





What disciplined his "heats of youth?"

Or did he "eddy round and round"?

Or dared old Merlin say the sooth

And with true manhood kept him crowned?



Or held he, like Sir Galahad,

All damsels in a nameless fear?

Then was Sir Launcelot never mad,

Nor ever false was Guenevere!





xbii

For still Religion halts between
The maiden's tomb, the infant's cot ;
(Since only once the Nazarene
Was in a virgin womb begot);



And doubtful which most aids his power,
The small unconscious proselyte
Or she that will renounce her dower
Of womanhood, for God's delight,





He stands between the sun and shade,
He teaches this impossible mean,
That foul and common may be made
By muttered magic fair and clean!



In vain he consecrates the wine,
To purify the sacrament,
In vain he sanctifies the sign,
Except the inward grace consent.





xlvi

I cannot think they do God's will
Who raise a sacramental sign
High on the Galilean hill
Where Jesus made the water wine,



And thither turn the damsel's eyes
To seek a consecrated goal,
Forgetful that the lover's prize
Is only found within the soul





Where passion's Sangreal fills the shrine,
That else is empty, garnished, swept,
And holds the only nuptial wine,
The vintage from creation kept !

33
9

Beside the door, like rays of sun,
The seraphs stand, to guard from sin
The holy vase ; but Love, as one
Of royal birth, shall enter in.



41



xi

Come hither, child, and hear a thing
Kept secret since the world began!
And yet not I the message bring,
But all the prophet-bards to Man.



When you the Marriage Symbol see,
And votaries in abasement roll,
Remember, the reality
Inhabits nothing save the Soul.





Save in your heart of hearts you bear
For him who sues to make you bride
The very passion that would dare
Of all but him to be denied,



No regent power assumed by Rome,
No grace of less vicariate See
Shall cleanse you, though you win a Home
Or wanton in Society!





33

For how is Lust by Love arraigned,
Base passion by the passion pure,
If Love from loving be restrained,
Or Love of loving be not sure ?

34

O bride that waits the bride-groom's arms,
What bring you to his fond caress ?
A spirit vitiate with alarms,
Or enervate with emptiness ?





Then why unbolt the chamber locks,
To crucifix and convent gear
Admitting, when your husband knocks,
The demon you professed to fear ?



Oh, rise and fly before he come !
Lest passionate Love, by you defiled,
Rush forth to seek a purer home !
Go, get you to a nunnery, child !





xxi

God deemed that Eden's innocence
 Could not be kept by Man, *alone* :
And Milton held, with sturdy sense,
 That flesh of flesh and bone of bone

§§
9

Was shaped by God from Adam's side :
 No soul of alien saintlihead ;
No basilisk thing,—a loveless bride ;
 But apt and willing to be wed.





But when, too cognisant of ill,
With strange lascivious craft they strove
To imitate by conscious will
The sweet, spontaneous deeds of Love,



Death entered. . . . Yet not all was lost :
Before the Seraph shut the gate,
A little Love the threshold crossed
And followed them disconsolate !





xxii

“ From superstition’s deadly thralls
Deliver us,” we rightly pray,
When History’s bloody page recalls
The errors of an earlier day :

33

But yet, has superstition ceased ?
What means this pilgrimage of brides,
To join the sacrificial feast
Where God himself, they say, presides ?





Although ambition be attained
And conscience by the priest be freed,
What if the sanction God ordained
Be wanting,—Love's imperious need ?



If so, howe'er the Church impute
The chastity her faith implies,
These stand not far above the brute,
That eats and drinks and multiplies.





xxiii

Those celibates that crowd the sky
And hold in simple fee their youth,—
What think they of our litany
Of plain and platitudinous truth,



That Marriage is the corner-stone
Of Home; nay, more,—of Social Life?
Or envy they the sweets unknown
Of husband, family, or wife?





I know not how the angels fare ;
But this I know,—one soul at least,
In robes of privileged despair,
Shall flout the heavenly Wedding Feast ;



Shall enter in and speak on high :
“ Not by Thy law of sex I come
Attired thus ; but clothed am I
By laws of Social Life and Home ! ”





xxiv

Meseems that individual guilt
 Makes hiding-holes in common good,
And many a victim's blood is spilt,
 Because the priest delights in blood !



The marriage sanction feeds the strength
 Of nations,—grown beyond all girth,
Portentous,—and the venomous length
 Of armies that enfold the Earth ;





But ever and anon, by fiend
In hierarchal robes arrayed,
Some innocent, some lamb unweaned,
Across the bloody stone is laid ;



The people half avert their eyes,
Or else are held in selfish awe ;
“The welfare of the most !” he cries ;
And they respond, “It is the Law !”





xxb

Hither the strolling Waxworks came ;
Her lover brought her to the Show,
The very night he wrought her shame ;
A year ago, a year ago.

53

How different looks the sordid room !
What different folk have come to hear
The magistrates dispensing doom
To devotees of tavern beer !



54



And must she now, for suffering wrong,
Unwomanly confession make,
Before this coarse, contemptuous throng? . . .
For baby's sake, for baby's sake !



Her soul is sickening from the task !
Her mother takes her nerveless hand ;
The wretched pittance she must ask,
And bear the brand, and bear the brand !





xxiii

O ladies,—ye whom passion stirs
No more than thunder far away,
That round the opal mountain-spurs
Beats, like a summer sea, all day,—

55

Now tell me, ladies, when began
The real crime between these twain?
You answer, “When the selfish man
Plucked pleasure at her cost of pain.”





O sedulous to guard the fire
Of Hymen's altar! Yet ye prove
Too much; or else with me admire
Her sweet abandonment of love.



Ye miss the man's essential sin,
That even devils might dare to hate:
He heard the Social Ghost steal in
And whisper low, "Repudiate!"





xxiii

Brothels, 'tis true, are built of stones
Religious ; and the flaunting flower
Of Marriage sucks from harlots' bones
The self-respect the streets devour.



For Man made Marriage ; God made Love:
And Man the mystic Idol wrought
As one should cast a silver dove
And think the Holy Ghost is caught.





Are Idols, then, not wholly ill,
 Though formally condemned? . . He knows
Who keeps the World in childhood still,
 And pleased with images and shows:



But, if the Social Ark we boast,
 Who boasts the social kennel-streams
That bear it up? . . . The Holy Ghost? . . .
 We live in dreams, we live in dreams.





xxbiii

Unlovingly these judgments sound ;
And yet they shall not be annulled
For all the beauty ever crowned
With all the blossoms ever culled !

53

By prophets shall the world be saved ;
For not with fleshly eyes they see ;
And future peoples shall be graved
With prophecies of poesy.





For all the singers teach us this
 (Though oft they sing with impulse blind),
That only Love's victorious bliss
 By passion purifies the mind.



A myriad ways they shape the theme,
 While itching fools stand round and gape;
They give occasion to blaspheme,
 But yet again the theme they shape!





xxix

Upbraid me not because I sing
Outside the violets and thyme ;
I cannot keep within the ring
Where pretty poets pluck their rhyme,

53

And twist gay garlands for the feast,
Believing that mere shape and hue
Ennoble men above the beast,
Or worms that know not what they do.





The fairness of the flower is not
Within itself ; but in the Mind
Its heavenly beauty is begot
By the Eternal Type behind ;



And so I count the humblest reed,
Toned to the stream of thought that flows
About the world, an apter weed
For minstrels than the trellised rose.





xxx

Some day, when war is self-devoured
And buccaneering trade is slain,
When over every land is showered
The harvest of its native plain,

§§

Art will be seen the noblest thing
That God has ever brought to birth,—
The soul through semblance shadowing,
The saving salt of all the Earth!





For when the wolf is laid to sleep
And serpents win no more regard,
The World's entombéd Soul shall leap
To light again,—the Sacred Bard !



No beggar of the public crust,
No pensioner on treasure-trove,
The great Antagonist of Lust,
The great Evangelist of Love !





xxxí

They batter at the public gate,
The beggar-bards,—a rabble rout !
The Watch within is obdurate,—
The priests and soldiers keep them out !

53

For those cry “Impious !” These cry “Fools !”
Unless one sing a martial strain
Or else his dogg’rel doctrine schools
To time the sacerdotal train :





Him they admit; and him who brings
A puppet-booth, where viler verse
Is screamed by dolls to villain strings
Than madmen to their walls rehearse!



Not yet the common mind abhors
The bastard notes of genius bought;
For e'en with poverty it wars
Less fiercely than it wars with Thought.





xxxiii

Rise, Poesy, and claim thine own !
Let not young Science steal the thought
Philosophy and Verse alone
In happier days together wrought !

33
9

Give o'er, give o'er the twaddling lay
Of moon and dream and passing mood,
An insult to the dawning day
Whose generations cry for food.





Imagination ! Truth's own son
And sole interpreter ! O Art !
Who weldest diverse things in one
And cleavest unities apart,—



Religion search and Science scan,
But yet of neither make thy choice ;
Then of the Universe and Man
Be thine the Vision, thine the Voice !





xxxiii

O Poets,—ye that sometime quaffed
The mountain rills of Castaly,—
If ye despise your holy craft,
Let there be war 'twixt you and me !



For though a feeble sword I shake,
With me the larger legions ride
Of all who suffered for the sake
Of Poesy and martyrs died.





They suffered an imperative stress,
Bent bows that no man might unbend,
To count the World unworthiness,
To speak their message to the end.

53
9

The World tormented them and gave
Salt tears and ashes for their food ;
They laboured by an open grave
And won of Death their livelihood.





xxxib

Man's scanty title to the sun
Imports the better right to die ;
And round and round the World would run,
Though all the streams of Art were dry.



Cease, music, painting, sculpture, rhyme !
Go, take to huckstering instead !
Either degenerate is the time,
Or ye are weaker than the dead !





Then to the source of Art proceed ;
Burn all the Sacred Books ; spare none
Except the Hymnal and the Creed,
And Forty Articles, save one !



Blot out the monuments of Greece,
The Roman and the Florentine ;
Still would the shepherd wear the fleece,
The butcher still sit down to dine !





xxxv

Still would the World go round and round,
And poets that despise their art
Could tend the flocks or till the ground,
Or hawk in Thespis' apple-cart !



For better far to beg or dig
(Though bards are beggars all, for praise)
Than underneath the vine or fig
To fashion unbelieving lays ;





And, doomed to odious labour, spin
Songs without faith in song ; or chase
A Muse not “glorious within,”—
A painted doll, with double face !



A creature of enamelled phrase,
The darling of a dalliant throng ;
An idle song of empty days,
Made emptier by an idle song.





The public is the judge, you say.

Now God forbid ! . . . Unless ye choose
That fools should judge you, rather they
Are judged by all the joy they lose.



Bread must ye win ; but none can live,
Save public tools, by bread alone :
There is a Soul that clamours " Give " !
Ye surely will not give a stone ?





Feed your own soul and ye shall feed
The World's,—the mind of honest men ;
Not those who turn the cranks of greed
In Mammon's pestilential den,



And issuing forth, with jaded wit,
For recreation seek the schools
Of charlatans ; unfew, unfit,—
The public fools, the public fools !





xxbii

I see Humanity as one
Scarce adolescent Soul, that grows
By seasons of no moon or sun,
Nor destined to a senile close:



From age to age still journeying on
To God, who evermore recedes,
He hears, before, a benison;
Behind, he hears the crash of creeds;





And casting off the worthless type,
 Though never quite exempt from clay,
Becomes, with less corruption ripe,
 And grows mature, with less decay ;



Till, mergent into happier state
 And nobler place than heaven or hell,
Though never wholly consummate,
 He justifies the primal Spell.





xxviii

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xxxviii

And Love I see, a weanling child,
Kept by a sad, salacious crew
In bondage; ridiculed, reviled
For antics he is taught to do.

§

To fuller stature he shall grow
And cast away his childish things,
His quiver and his puny bow,
His arrows and pretended wings ;





That he may win his realm and throne
From Lust, the tyrant, who by wrong
Usurps those instincts that alone
To Love's prerogative belong.



For though he be a weanling child,
In him the worlds of soul and sense
Are destined to be reconciled;
But aeons hence, and aeons hence!





xxxix

Why preach profanity so great,
Of Revelation standing still,
And all of Man determinate,
Save Science, grinding at her mill?

§

Of doom ordained two thousand years,
That yet with God's connivance floats
Suspensively, till Satan rears
His proper complement of goats?





This Human Soul for ever grows ;
This creature out of God's own hands
Is dowered with fierce inherent throes
To burst Religion's swaddling-bands ;

535
9

And that confusion, Love miscalled,
The narrow cell in which he lies,
Shall be unraftered and unwall'd,
And made commensurate with the skies.





xl

Ye boast of Science. . . . Has it touched
The heart of man, or woman's mind ?
Or is the poor old World as crutched
As ever, and as deaf and blind ?

xl

Besotted with the frantic fear
Of poverty and crazed with greed,
To buy men cheap and sell them dear
Is all his Gospel, all his Creed ;



84





From battle-field to battle-field
He limps along his bloody way,
In vain by all the Past appealed
And sightless of the coming Day ;



The subtlest instruments designed
By Science leave his spirit rude ;
He worships still, in savage kind,
His Fetish, Family, and Feud.





æli

As if the clock should mock the dial,
Though puppet of the self-same sun,
Young Science scorns thy wise denial
Of purpose purposeless begun :



Let him not vex thee ; have no fear,
Pale priestess of the trine tiar !
Not hence thy danger. One is here,
A worthier foe and greater far !





A maid not palace-reared is she,
But born "in huts where poor men lie";
There first she wrought her wizardry,
Her commerce with the earth and sky.



Not hers to force the gates of heaven,
And, entering in, defile the fane;
She labours with a secret leaven
Among thy measured meal of pain !





xliv

Among the porticoes she walks,
And marts "where men do congregate,"
And there to lowly minds she talks
Of those who "leave their first estate":



Their first estate of joy they leave,
So pure, impassioned, and elate,
And learn from Piety to grieve
Because their hearts are passionate;





Or else, beside their natural wits,
They fly where Piety has shown
The painted actress Folly sits
Upon her tawdry, tinselled throne;



Cloyed with her lavish, cold caress,
To Piety they turn again,
The unintending procuress
To Folly and to Folly's pain.





xlili

So Art, the true Hypatia, speaks
Of Love, with no uncertain tongue,—
As erst she spoke to Jews and Greeks,
As erst in Rome and Florence sung.

53
9

The secret hearts of men she fills
With such unlicensed thought, I swear
Saint Peter hates her;—from his hills
Would flash and slay her, if he dare !





Too late he grieves his Books contain
The cry of Love and human wrongs,
Job's Epic of immortal pain
And Solomon's Mask, the Song of Songs.



Art wrote the volume in his hand ;
Himself by Art is crowned and shod ;
And yet he cannot understand
Art also is the Word of God.





ælib

Nay, rather,—can he read at all
The sacred tidings clearly writ
For those who have not lost, in thrall
Of maddened fear, their mother wit ?

§3
9

It runs from Genesis to John,
Nor even then the message trips;
To Maccabees it journeys on ;
One orbit of apocalypse !





For as men deemed the shining sphere
Was almost in their hand's assay,
Till drawn by lens and crystal near,
It proved a billion leagues away,



So Revelation, once supposed
The earthly footsteps of a God,
Is clearer seen, yet less enclosed,
In every place that Man has trod,





xliv

Is Man not marvellous enough?
Why will he ever seek, behind
The soul that God has clothed with slough,
The breath of more mysterious wind ?

lv

He clammers to the lonely peaks,
He drifts about the lonelier sea,
To hear what Revelation speaks
Beneath the night's immensity;





He strives to pierce the outer dark
Wherein the Soul and Sense divide;
But God has set his barrier mark,
Lest either pass from side to side.



The gamut of himself replies,—
Of love that knows, of lust that fears;
The hate of truth, the hate of lies;
The hope of joy, the sense of tears.





xlvi

The great procession lags along,
With scarlet copes and smouldering fires,
With banners raised and sacred song
That Gregory stole from Grecian lyres.

53

Vicars of God, who judge the soul
Eternally to bask or burn,
Who read creation like a scroll,
Nor e'en of God have much to learn,





The fulness of your day has been !
The savour of the salt is lost !
For lewder men have far foreseen
A greater Feast of Pentecost.



Yet no miraculous device
Shall touch your altars to their shame ;
The frequent daylight shall suffice,
The common sun shall quench the flame.





xlvi

The colours melt from shade to shade,
From tint to tint,—a gorgeous cope;
A purple pattern of brocade;
The vestment of a Chinese pope.

53

A patch across the midst is sewn,
Conspicuous, yet of like degree;
By this the wearer may be known
To keep his vow of poverty!





All Christian nations ought to wear
That pretty emblematic coat,—
With pretty emblematic tear,
For conscience-clause and saving note !



Hang up a skull of beaten gold
Above the feast ! The words are dead
Of One for thirty shekels sold,
Who had not where to lay his head.





xlvi

With gamblers' faces weird and wild
We press to hear new prophets preach ;
Yet folded, docketed, and filed,
How soon their most prophetic speech !



The labels wait me, ready penned,—
Partitioned shelf and lacquered box !
“Free-thinker ” and “Free-lover ” end
The list begun “Unorthodox.”





“Free-thinker?” Yes; if thought be free
Envassalled to the laws of thought!
“Free-lover?” Yes; because to me
All other loves than one are nought!



Old Dagon from his column slips
Dislodged by no man; and I tire
Of Evolution on the lips
That advertise their own desire.





xlix

Apologists for God, descant

No more upon his ways to *Man*!

First justify the sycophant

To God—who made him—if ye can.

53

There is no blasphemy, but one,—

Of servile souls, who question not;

Who think by favouring God to shun

Perdition. This is unforget;





This is recorded. Happy they,
If God rebuke them; like the friends
Reiterant, of Job; nor slay,
Nor bring them to untimely ends!



Because they speak the thing abhorred
By honest tyrants; speak, for fear,
Like slaves in presence of their lord,
The tale they deem he lusts to hear.





I

I close : and yet I have not said
The things I give my life to say.
O subtle tint ! O subtler shade !
O glory still so far away !

§

But not of sunset ; no ! more white,
More solemn, o'er the World's dark hill
Bosoms the tide of living light,
Of perfect Passion, perfect Will !





When God our captive sight redeems
From old Religion's prismic spell,
That combs the sunshine into beams
And separate hues of heaven and hell;



When all the signets are unsealed,
Each after each, and Love, the last,
In robes of wisdom is revealed,
Amid the foil of folly past.





NOTE

ONE or two words occur in the quatrains that are not to be found in dictionaries, and several quotations that are not verbally exact and are, therefore, not placed in inverted commas.



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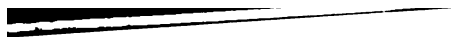
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